



FLUVANNA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

14455 JAMES MADISON HIGHWAY
PALMYRA, VIRGINIA 22963

12/16/24

Dear FLUCO families:

On November 19, 2024, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) sent a letter to clinicians across the state about an increase in diagnosed pneumonia. The BRHD is also seeing an increase in pneumonia cases, especially in school-aged children.

FCPS wants to make sure you are aware of this so that you know: 1) what to do if your child becomes sick, and 2) how you can help prevent illness.

About pneumonia

- Pneumonia means there is an infection in the lungs.
- Pneumonia can be caused by many different types of germs (including viruses, bacteria, and fungi).
- Illness can range from mild to severe and can even be life-threatening.
- People who are more likely to get very sick from pneumonia include children younger than 5 years old, adults 65 years or older, people who smoke, and people with ongoing health conditions or weakened immune systems.
- Symptoms of pneumonia can include cough, sore throat, fever, chills, shortness of breath, chest pain, muscle aches, loss of appetite, rapid breathing, and a rapid pulse.

Laboratory testing has identified many different germs as the cause, primarily rhinoviruses/enteroviruses and *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*.

- [Rhinovirus infections](#) are the main cause of the common cold but can make people with asthma or other lung illness sicker. Symptoms can range from mild cough to pneumonia.
- [Mycoplasma pneumoniae](#) infection most often affects school-aged children and young adults. People who have recently been ill with a respiratory illness and those with a weakened immune system are at increased risk for serious infection. *M. pneumoniae* infections are generally mild and mostly present as a chest cold but may also present as pneumonia. Symptoms can include fever, cough, and sore throat.

What to do if you think your child has pneumonia

If your child is ill with the symptoms mentioned above, please contact your child's healthcare provider for evaluation. You may show this letter to the provider so that they know what is occurring in the community. If your child is diagnosed with pneumonia, the healthcare provider



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may contact the health district for consultation and to coordinate testing through the state laboratory (Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services/DCLS) at no cost to you.

Preventing pneumonia and other respiratory illnesses

You and your child can take the following steps:

- Wash hands often, especially when exposed to someone with an infection or when touching objects that may be contaminated.
- Cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues when coughing or sneezing or use your inner arm (elbow crease), but do not use your hands.
- Dispose of facial tissues that contain nasal secretions after each use. Wash hands afterwards.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth.
- Routinely clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces, toys, etc., as recommended.

Stay home if ill

- Individuals should stay home from school when sick
- Students who are sick should remain home until they are fever-free for a full 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have improved such that they are feeling well enough to participate in school activities.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick

Resources

[FCPS Attendance](#)

- a reminder to communicate with the site based school attendance coordinator regarding absences.

[CDC About Pneumonia](#)

[FCPS Nursing Department](#)

[Too Sick for School](#)